

PEACE NEWS

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2d.

*We must go **BACK TO THE BEGINNING** and learn from the*

Mistakes that Brought this War

By "COMMENTATOR"

THIS war has now become so vast, the territories involved are so widespread, and the number of its innocent victims amount to so many millions, that the man-in-the-street may well be pardoned if he has completely forgotten how it all began.

Its occasions, as distinct from its deep revolutionary causes, were so comparatively small that they have become obscure and almost irrelevant.

"Observer's" comments, in a recent issue of Peace News, on the "regressive stupidity" of the policy by which Dr. Benes proposes first to divide and then "re-educate" Germany for "two or three generations," remind us that a war which now involves all the major as well as a host of minor Powers, which is shaking the British Empire to pieces, and already threatens India was precipitated by the partisans of Poland and Czechoslovakia.

The problem of the Polish Corridor—an unjust arrangement of which everyone frankly admitted the unfairness until the Nazis began to make it a *casus belli*—was never worth a minor war, let alone a world cataclysm. It is now also obvious to everyone that, short of Franco-British strength sufficiently overwhelming to make possible an attack on Germany's Western front as soon as the Nazis invaded Poland, the Polish guarantee was one which this country could never have implemented.

Mr. Chamberlain undoubtedly knew this. His broadcast speech, announcing the change-over of his government from an appeasement policy to one of guarantees, sounded neither enthusiastic nor confident. But Mr. Chamberlain and his party machine realized clearly enough that, after the uproar which followed Munich, he could not "sell" another European country and command sufficient support to retain his Premiership.

"Bluff"

The guarantee to Poland which was the immediate cause of war thus arose partly from the vanity of Mr. Chamberlain, who was anxious to remain in office, and still more from the Conservatism of the Conservative Party, which wished to keep him there.

But most of all it was due to the outcry of the irresponsible groups which protested that the Government was threatening to sacrifice Poland as it had sacrificed Czechoslovakia, and demanded that it "call Hitler's bluff"—without, in their ignorance of our state of military preparedness, once considering whether it might not be Hitler who would call our bluff, and still more the bluff of France.

Three weeks later Poland, without even an adequate gesture of practical assistance from France and Britain, had been "sacrificed" more terribly, and far more completely, than she would ever have been by even the most unfavourable settlement of the Corridor.

The case of Czechoslovakia takes us several steps further back. After the last war the Czechs created a friendly, attractive Republic, ideally democratic for the Czech majority. By 1924 they were already charmingly accomplished in the art of advertising their young country.

Travellers received beautifully illustrated brochures on Czech history, scenery, industry, and art. Even quite obscure visitors arriving with

modest introductions were shown round by Government officials and presented with free tickets to the opera. The more famous were proportionately entertained and lionized.

It was not surprising that those guests of the Republic—and they were, of course, the large majority—whose political judgments tended to be emotional rather than coolly detached, should regard the young democracy as a near-Utopia, and its dethroned leaders as martyrs who had in no way contributed to their own unhappy fate.

"Czechoslovakia First"

But the Czechs, like many other delightful nationals, were better Czechs than Europeans. They put up high tariffs against their neighbours, thereby contributing to the ruin of Austria. They maintained an over-large armaments industry. It was also symptomatic that even the League of Nations—which might, one would suppose, have united its friends—was supported in Czechoslovakia by two League of Nations societies, one Czech and the other German.

Even in the cause of peace the two could not work together, for though there was much American enterprise in the Czechoslovakia of the nineteen-twenties and thirties, there were two lessons which the Americans could have taught them that the Czech leaders failed to learn. One was the art of absorbing minorities (of which the USA has not one but a score) in such a manner that they retained

their national characteristics while loyally transferring their political allegiance. The other was the lesson, demonstrated by the American and Canadian diplomats who made the Rush-Bagot agreement which established the undefended 3,000 mile frontier after the war of 1812, that if you want peace you must make friends with your former adversary on a basis of mutual interests which will finally lead to trust.

The Czechs did the opposite. Like the Poles and the Yugo-Slavs, they tied themselves to the chariot wheels of French politicians whose object (with one or two outstanding exceptions such as Aristide Briand) was to use the League of Nations to maintain the *status quo* as established at Versailles. They thus helped to destroy the one international instrument which might have saved them when the crisis came.

Of this policy Dr. Benes and other leading Czech statesmen were auxiliary spokesmen year after year at Geneva. For all their charm and their genuine idealism, they backed the wrong horse. The French proceeded to let them down at Munich, and two years afterwards to let down everybody else. This failure in realism of the Czechs and their supporters played its part in plunging the world into catastrophic war.

They Never Learn

Unhappily, if the views of Dr. Benes on the future of Germany (quoted by "Observer" from the Sunday Times) are correctly reported, the Czech capacity for realism does not appear to have been increased by bitter experience.

Some who criticize the peace movement complain that its members talk far too much about what happened in 1932, or 1936, instead of concentrating on current problems. The reason is simple. No-one can work to divert the course of history into new channels—the only basic cure for such

(Continued on page 4)

COMMENTARY

Edited by "OBSERVER"

Report on Morale

PANIC in the press; apathy and indifference in the public. That is a rough report of the visible condition of British morale. When it is not overtly panicked, the press is entirely fatuous. Here are some gems.

This year 1942 is the time, and here is the place where we must consider the plans and projects that will sustain the British Empire for ever (Express, Mar. 7).

Two questions arise. Are the Japanese superhuman? If not, how is their advance to be countered? ... There is no occasion for panic (News Chronicle, Mar. 7).

At long last, Tories are, in desperation, finding that ours is the only way out of catastrophe ("Ours" being Labour's, the Daily Herald's and Mr. Hannan Swaffer's, who wrote that in the Herald, Mar. 9).

But not merely the press. The Dominions Office achieved this in a message to Australia: "At the moment the Empire team is battling on a sticky wicket, and the Axis fast bowlers have achieved some success." Evidently, we revert to cricket in catastrophe: see our editorial for a masterpiece in cricket metaphors.

America adds its pearl. The United Nations, says Admiral Hart, "are pretty nearly at the point where they will have to retake ground lost in the Far East." (News Chronicle Mar. 9).

THE bombing of the Paris factories is an insensate reaction to disaster. We dare not think; we strike blindly at whatever we can strike, regardless of the real effect of our action. Even the News Chronicle (Mar. 9) at last realizes that "When a man is hungry he thinks more of food than freedom." This journal has been dinning that into deaf ears for years.

The effect of smashing a munitions factory has to be weighed against the effect of angering or antagonizing a people whom we spend hours on the radio every day trying to woo and win to our active support.

The grim truth is that we have lost our heads. In order to produce a momentary and false impression of activity, to keep up morale at home, we madly outrage a nation.

Deceiving Ourselves

WE tell ourselves lies, lies, lies. The action of the Dutch fleet against the invading transports was placarded as a great naval victory; it was a great naval defeat, however noble the heroism of the Dutch. And

(Continued on page 2)

CAMPAIGN FOR FOOD RELIEF

Support of Bishop of Birmingham

A MESSAGE in support of the campaign for controlled food relief has been received from the Bishop of Birmingham. He writes (under the date Feb. 16):—

I hesitate at such a time as the present to advocate any policy which might add to the difficulties of the Government. It is good to know that some food will be sent to Greece as soon as arrangements can be made. But in other subjugated countries than Greece people are starving. These people are our friends. Controlled distribution of food would not help the enemy but would prevent terrible suffering. I cannot believe that our country would ever have reason to regret its action if food went to friendly and starving peoples.

The Peace Pledge Union is aiming to raise £200 immediately for the food relief campaign. Groups are being asked for an average contribution of 10s. each, and readers of Peace News are urged to help to raise the sum.

FOOD FOR GREECE

The Swedish steamer Hellenen has left the Baltic for Lisbon on its way to Greece to take 3,000 tons of wheat and other food.

The Diplomatic Correspondent of The Times stated on Tuesday that the ship had been chartered by the British Government, which made all arrangements through the International Red Cross. "The foodstuffs which she will take on board in Lisbon have been paid for by the Greek Government."

MORE FOOD AVAILABLE

The Argentine Government have placed at the disposal of the Greek Government 20,000 tons of wheat, without fixing any date of payment and without interest charges, reported the London Evening Standard, Mar. 7. But it is stipulated that the Greek Government must provide shipping.

The United States and British Governments have agreed to allow the Greek War Relief Association of New York to charter a ship for the transport of 2,300 tons of flour from the United States, provided adequate guarantees are obtained from the Axis Governments (D. Herald, Mar. 7).

Construction

A READER, but lately converted to pacifism, sold out a small investment in War Bonds and sent the Fighting Fund the proceeds, with the words: "I shall be happy to know that you will be able to use it for means of construction rather than destruction."

The purpose of the Fighting Fund is pre-eminently constructive. It is to establish an independent pacifist printing press. Pacifist propaganda—in the constructive sense of educating people into an understanding of the bases of a peaceful society—becomes of increasing importance every day. It is imperative that it should be as independent as possible of the machinery of existing society. The independent printing press is, as it were, the physical brain-structure of the new social organism which it is the purpose of pacifism to create in the decaying tissues of the old.

Contributions during the past fortnight £29 1s. 3d. Total to date £3,252 14s. 3d.

The Editor

Please make all cheques, P.O.s, and money orders for the Peace News fund payable to Peace News Ltd., and crossed "a/c Payee" and address them to the Accountant, Peace News, 3 Blackstock Road, London, N.4.

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Gone For Six!

THE bombing has begun again. But before it began some interesting confessions had begun to appear in the press. Thus the News Chronicle (Mar. 4) announced as a matter of common knowledge:

At the outset of the war the Germans did not believe in bombing. It was not till after the Battle of Britain that they followed our example.

Yet that precisely was denied with indignation, again and again. We were assured that the Germans began it. Now we know.

The belated honesty of the News Chronicle takes it further. Apparently we have reached a point in the war where we can afford to be candid. It says:

We talked of attacking military and industrial objectives only and deplored the German method of dropping bombs indiscriminately over the wide target area of towns. Yet we know well that when our bombs missed factories in the Rhineland industrial area the surrounding houses of civilians went for six, and so did many of the civilians.

"Went for six," dear reader, is a metaphor from cricket. When you condole with somebody who has lost someone dear to him in the next blitz, do not forget to tell him to be a sportsman and take satisfaction in his relative having been hit out of the ground "for six."

However, the point of the article is to explain that our previous bombing policy has failed, but that unfortunately our production has been geared to produce heavy bombers so long that we have a large stock of them on hand. They must be used, even though by now it is well understood that they cannot achieve their original purpose, which was to paralyse German war-industry. They must be used therefore on the German principle, making the destruction of a single town the objective. In short, give the Germans "Coventry."

It has begun. It so happens that we have begun by giving Coventry not to the Germans, but the French. Billancourt, an industrial suburb of Paris, was the objective. And the French are so lacking in imagination and enthusiasm for the true faith that they have dared to set up a howl because more than 600 people were killed and 1,000 injured. The Evening News (Mar. 4) assures us that the French "will willingly endure some travail for the grim pleasure of seeing their masters' devilish plans laid low."

It is a matter on which we should prefer the opinion of the French themselves. If they were indeed eager to suffer for the pleasure of seeing the German plans upset, they had only to put a few bombs in the factory themselves. That would have had the advantage that they would have taken care to put them in the right places. Since they did not avail themselves of the opportunity, we may presume that the inhabitants of Billancourt did not find even a grim pleasure in seeing 600 of their number knocked for six, and another 1,000 hit to the square-leg boundary, or cut neatly for two.

Perhaps that miserable Marshal Petain was nearer to the truth of French feeling—since they are a miserable people—when he declared that the funeral of the victims would be a national day of mourning.

The reference to "the new Archbishop of York" in last week's leader was to Dr. Temple, and should therefore have read: "the new Archbishop of Canterbury."

Neither the Peace Pledge Union nor Peace News itself is necessarily committed to views expressed in the articles we publish. (Still less does the acceptance of advertisements imply endorsement of any views expressed or implied therein or PPU connection with the matter advertised). Contributions are welcomed, though no payment is made. They should be typewritten, if possible, and one side only of the paper should be used. They should be kept as short as possible—preferably not more than 600 words. If replies are required, stamped addressed envelopes must be enclosed.

Hitler's Prophecy Comes to Pass!

where was the American fleet in that action? No wonder that the Japanese conquest of Java has thrown the Americans into panic; or that the question is being asked: "If they cannot defend Java, can they defend anything?" The disillusionment of the Dutch is pathetic. "In their greatest test and in their darkest hour they were virtually alone. And there is no doubt they felt alone." (Times, Mar. 9).

"Things will be what they will be; why then should I deceive myself?" was Bishop Butler's famous dictum. Why do we deceive ourselves? The answer, I fear, is: Because we dare not undeceive ourselves. As a nation we seem to have lost the capacity of seeing things as they are—the moral courage to face the truth.

European War Winner

THE Japanese have conquered Java. Rangoon has gone, in circumstances not very creditable to ourselves. Apparently, the majority of European civilian population bolted incontinently. The Burma Road has been effectively cut. That is to say, the whole of the Far East is now virtually in Japan's possession; and the possession is secured by natural defences which, when developed by Japan, will be practically impregnable. One is reminded of Hitler's words to Sir N. Henderson on August 25, 1939, (Blue Book: p. 123) that "the only winner of another European war would be Japan."

Beside the brute fact of the astonishing victory of Japan in the Far East, speculations on the future of Sir Stafford Cripps, however interesting, are parish-pump politics. What has happened is a kind of cosmic catastrophe—in three months! The German Blitzkrieg is child's play to this. But, of course, the staggering success of Japan, like the German Blitzkrieg, is only the visible culmination of a process that has been going on for decades. It began really in 1853 when the American Commodore

Perry taught the Japanese that Western civilization was superior solely because of its cannon. The Japanese learned their lesson. If they wanted to survive as a nation, they must learn these tricks of the Whites. In the Russo-Japanese War it was manifest that they had learned them well.

Historic Change

AFTER the battle of Tsushima, the electric word sped through the bazaars of India that the British Raj was ended. The time-sense of the immemorial East is different from ours. It has taken 40 years to make manifest an event that really happened then. The East has turned the tables on the West. We see it, we know it; but it does not register. Life in this country goes on. Nevertheless, it is certainly the mightiest change in history since the fall of the Roman Empire.

That is not to compare the fall of the British Empire with the fall of the Roman Empire. The British Empire is only a partial expression of the ascendancy of the West over the East. It is that ascendancy as a whole which is now in ruins. To talk, to dream of "holding India" by some political concessions to Indian nationalism is foolishness. Whatever the future relations of India, China, and Japan may be, Britain will have no voice in them. Neither will America. My wildly speculative mind wonders whether there may be a connection between this situation and Stalin's recent secret memorandum to the Pope.

Religious Challenge

THE Western world—the civilization to which Britain and France, Germany and America all belong—is now to be faced by a challenge such as it has never experienced, hardly even imagined, and for which it is completely unprepared. This challenge is just as much spiritual as material. Indeed, the essence of the situation is that the irreligious civilization of the West is now challenged by the religious civilizations of the East.

The religion of Japan may be a very queer religion from our point of view; but it is a very much more real religion than any we know. It has its roots far back in the ancestral past, and its fibres permeate the whole of human life. Compared to this, the quasi-religions of Fascism and Communism (which are the only dynamic religions of the West) are superficial. Let us look at some of the evidences.

Supermen?

MILITARILY, the Japanese have given us a far bigger shock than the Germans. We consoled ourselves with the belief that when it came to hand-to-hand fighting, the Briton always licked the German, who quivered at the sight of "cold steel." The Japanese

OUR DAILY BREAD

IN a recent number of Peace News Dr. Herbert Gray spoke of "the almost intolerable dilemma of the Christian pacifist." I wondered greatly at the thoughts expressed. As this is a matter of spiritual logic rather than of the mundane variety, one can only speak of the truth as it appears to oneself.

There are many stages or degrees of pacifist conviction. I was at a low one in 1902, when I wished that we might soon settle the Boers so that we might start being Christians again.

1914 saw me further on the road when I said, "They may rush to recruit, but that's not the job God put me here to do." There was a tacit assumption that fighting MIGHT be some men's providential vocation; and along with that, the idea that the armed forces were protecting my life and liberty. Those were the times of dilemma.

1916 saw me sentenced to death at Boulogne, but not as an absolute pacifist. I was fighting for my right, and every man's right, to follow his vocation—to take his orders from God only.

By 1918 I was sure that every new recruit to the Forces, instead of increasing my safety, was, in fact, jeopardising it and that war would only be banished when the minority of refusers had grown sufficiently large (10 per cent. might do it, 20 per cent. certainly would).

My dilemma was gone. I no longer felt indebted to the Navy for protecting my food. I felt rather that it was the Navy, and all the policy that the Navy represented that was endangering my food.

I felt that a Christian policy of treating the other chap as one would like to be treated oneself never endangered anyone's food supply. That policy had not been implemented. Hence the Navy; which

must, therefore, be considered as being necessary to protect the food of the framers and supporters of our evil foreign policy, but not to protect my food.

When I pray "Give us this day our daily bread," I believe God can feed me without my breaking his commandments. He has done so far, and will continue to do so.

Dr. Gray seems to have accepted as axiomatic too many premises considered as axiomatic by the military mind, but which we pacifists should lose no opportunity of debunking. His final sentence, "We may even discover that it is a great thing to be allowed to be in an almost intolerable dilemma WITH CHRIST" provides a climax of astonishment.

Christ in a dilemma! His enemies often tried to present him with a dilemma. Surely, the nearer one gets to Christ the less one is conscious of any dilemma!

JOHN H. BROCKLESBY

STORY OF A C.O.

Sergeant York is a very moving film biography, mainly because of the restrained and sincere performance of Gary Cooper as its subject, the American CO who became a national war-hero of 1918.

The best, most revealing sequences are those of York's pre-war life as a backwoods farmer in Tennessee. His character is so well built up, the influences of his environment so shrewdly shown, that we can accept his later acts as curiously consistent expressions of his nature and beliefs.

There is, throughout the film, a notable abstention from any gibe, direct or otherwise, at York's conscience in the matter of killing, and from any suggestion that he saw the fallacy of Christian teaching and so reformed. To the end, he remains a simple, honest man, of great moral and physical courage, whose individual integrity must inspire the highest respect in all of us.

The war sequences are, in my judgment, artistically, even cheaply, handled, the melodramatic element being stressed almost to the point of irrelevance, and there is, towards the close of the film, the not unexpected anticlimax of conventional sentimentality.

But, in spite of such lapses, Sergeant York remains considerably more than the mere glorification of a war-hero for recruiting and other purposes: it is the portrait and story of a fine character.

W. H. GELDER

A PACIFIST COMMENTARY (Continued from page one)

(it seems) like cold steel better than we do. Says Philip Jordan in the News Chronicle (Mar. 6) of the fighting in the Burmese jungle:

"Here all fighting is hand-to-hand and the weapons are a knife and a tommy-gun... They keep absolutely silent until our men are on top of them, and then let loose perhaps more noise than danger, followed by the rapid use of machine-guns, tommy-guns, crackers, and bombs. Behind this they rush to close quarters, where they use swords. They use battle cries extensively in the forest and jungle... and they really do live on two handfuls of rice a day... All this must not be taken to indicate that they are supermen."

What is a superman, anyhow? In the present context it is enough to acknowledge that the Japanese have carried the practice of war to a perfection undreamed of by us.

Yoga in Practice

FURTHERMORE, this warrior-perfection appears to be based on a very real psycho-physical religion. Mr. E. J. Harrison (New Statesman, Mar. 7) maintains, after "some 20 years close personal contact with the men who constitute the backbone of Japan's fighting services," that the Japanese soldier is far superior to the German in physical courage and individual initiative. He writes:

"The national arts of Judo (Jujitsu) and Kendo (fencing) sedulously practised by the student class provide an inexhaustible cadre on which to draw for military leadership. There is, however, more to it than that. During my own close study of the art of Judo in Tokyo, I made a singular discovery, the cultivation of abdominal force among Japanese teachers of Judo and Kendo more particularly. Perhaps the most distinguished exemplar of this esoteric, almost occult power, in my day was a certain Kunishige, then a sturdy veteran of 67, who could easily overpower opponents half his age, and perform numerous other feats which defied a normal explanation."

Mr. Harrison explains as far as possible. The practice is a species of Yoga; and reminds one of D. H. Lawrence's doctrine of the solar plexus.

Esotericism

THE source of the power is believed to be the tanden, or gall-bladder; and the power is developed by systematic deep-breathing exercises performed squatting, facing the rising sun. The lower abdomen is steadily inflated and deflated in a prescribed manner. It is not surprising that the application of this abdominal force "is often accompanied by a special kind of shout called the ki-ai (literally, spirit-meeting)." That is a good deal more serious than a Western battle-cry.

"In no other country known to me," says Mr. Harrison, "is esotericism so widely developed as in Japan, in association with the arts and crafts. Nearly every teacher of Judo, Kendo, swimming, archery, etc., has some jealously guarded secret throw, thrust, blow or stroke which he will impart only to the favoured few." It is not suggested that every Japanese is an adept in these religious arts; but that the elite—and a very numerous elite—are adepts, and these constitute the natural leaders of the race.

The Real Power

IT seems a far cry from all this to Gandhi; but in reality Gandhi is nearer to the Japanese than he is to us. The religious basis of his attitude is nearer to theirs, the psycho-physical practices of his religion more akin. And something of the affinity peeps out in a remarkable interview between him and Sir Evelyn Wrench (Spectator, Mar. 6). He dismissed the Hindu-Muslim opposition as an exploitation of a kind of religious differences whose real nature the British did not understand.

G: I have said that you should retire and we will have a pact in fifteen days. There may be civil war; it is highly probable there will be, but at the end of it there will be peace. Sir E: At the end of all war there is peace. G: Your proposition is wrong. You can only have lasting peace based on justice. We are an unarmed people. Your armies are meant to suppress an unarmed rebellion and are not for use by us. The Indian troops are mercenaries and would be of no use in civil war. It is the politically conscious Muslims and Hindus who will fight. They will fight with sticks, staves, and soda-water bottles, but they will soon tire, and there will be wise men enough among us to bring about an honourable peace.

I should like to quote that interview entire. It conveys the quality of the man. It takes a saint to be a genuine realist. And the way in which Gandhi looks clean through the unconscious humbug of the sweet reasonableness of the founder of the English-Speaking Union is salutary. It struck me forcibly as I read the interview that here, and nowhere else that I can see, is the real power to withstand in creative conflict the different but prodigious heroism of the Japanese.

Britain and Russia

IN face of the whole situation it is not surprising that The Times is following Sir Stafford Cripps in pressing for a closer political agreement between Britain and Russia. The territorial basis of the proposed agreement, in Cripps's own words, is that Russia "must ask for those boundaries which it has fought to defend against Germany—the boundaries of June 1941." (Mail, Mar. 7). It is difficult to see why Russia should ask our agreement for that. If she wins against Germany, she will take it; if she loses, she will not get it. Britain does not come into the picture.

The Manchester Guardian (Mar. 9) seriously apprehends a Japanese attack on eastern Russia, to coincide with the German offensive in the spring. Anyhow, it is as well to bear in mind that (1) the Russians have not succeeded in recapturing any of the critical strong points—e.g., Orel, Kharkov, Taganrog—or in relieving Leningrad; (2) the promised American supplies are greatly in arrears; (3) the British supplies are relatively small; (4) the shipping situation is the worst ever. Therefore, the hope that Russia will defeat Germany this year and so "permit the turning of the whole allied might against Japan" appears rather forlorn, unless there is a breakdown of German morale.

THE basis of the Peace Pledge Union is the following pledge which is signed by each member:

I RENOUNCE WAR AND I WILL NEVER SUPPORT OR SANCTION ANOTHER.

The address to which new signatures of the pledge should be sent, and from which further particulars may be obtained is:

PPU HEADQUARTERS,
Dick Sheppard House,
6 Endsleigh St., W.C.1.

Unity Through Effort

By JOHN BARCLAY

A PARLIAMENT which has lost its opposition is moribund, and a movement loses its vitality without the constant vigilance of well-informed critics. By refusing to accept a ready made constitution the PPU is constructing its own form of government by trial and error. There can be no return to the comparative simplicity of pre-war political methods, for as we advance we destroy our bridges behind us. We must expect difficulties and be prepared to overcome each with a fresh mind. It is our job in the Areas to achieve unity.

Half the joy of a free association comes from a refusal to follow the line of least resistance. Diversity of opinion, which often appears to baulk all attempts at reaching concord, is the material out of which final unity must be achieved.

The difficulties inherent in Area Development are those which have been the downfall of many pioneers in the past. At the moment, when

N.B.

MEMBERSHIP of the Annual General Meeting of the PPU—to be held in Friends House, London, April 25 and 26—is open to one representative from each Group and to any individual member of the PPU. Admission will be by tickets only, for which applications should be received not later than Mar. 27, by which date also nominations for Chairman, Treasurer, and twenty members of Council must be received.

NOMINATIONS can be made either by a Group or by one individual seconded by another, but must be accompanied by the consent of the nominee. Elections will be by the Groups, and a voting paper will be sent to each Group Secretary (whether the Group sends a representative to the AGM or not) on Mar. 31. Voting papers must be returned not later than first post on April 23.

WRITE to Headquarters for further particulars of the PPU's fifth

A.G.M.

all efforts are needed to remove the obstacles in the path, energy and attention become focussed on internal differences.

A COMMON CAUSE

The task of constructive pacifists is to resolve this conflict by a measure of common consent and reach unanimity through service in a common cause. The challenge is easily met. There is no lack of opportunity; it waits at every turn.

Since the campaign was begun to urge on the Government the need for controlled food-relief the channel has been open along which the most diverse opinions have been united and a large measure of success achieved. In the effort to unite pacifist and non-pacifist behind this campaign the PPU has once more made contact with the outside world. Public meetings are becoming a common feature of Group and Area activity, and the way lies open to advance along other lines.

Total conscription and all its dangers to freedom and democracy give us opportunities to preach our faith and confound our critics. They believe we are moved by self-interest and incapable of united action. It is up to us to prove that the contrary is the case and to show it by unity of effort expressed through a new drive in the Areas. Only by our devotion can the future be safeguarded.

J.B.

The Way Things Change!

By JOHN SCANLON

IN the first week of October 1929 the newspapers of Britain revealed signs of great mental perturbation. They had learned somehow that the Rt. Hon. Arthur Henderson, Foreign Secretary in the Labour Government, had met representatives of the Russian Government.

This in itself was bad enough, but when it was revealed that they had not met in the orthodox way but in the little wayside town of Lewes it was assumed that something sinister was afoot. There was.

The representatives of the two Governments had met to discuss the resumption of the normal trading relations which had been broken in 1927 by the Conservative Government of Britain when Russia's autarkic trading centre Arcos was booted out.

For a time the newspapers had the field to themselves. It was a good story. Lewes, only mentioned when somebody breaks from its prison, became quite a place.

At first many people felt that a trade treaty with Russia would make little difference to anybody. We knew they were hopelessly inefficient; that their harvest was always a failure. Few people doubted this, for it is accepted that any country with which we are at loggerheads always has light harvests and heavy snowfalls. Actually, we did not trouble to go outside these routine reports, and there

seemed to have been a considerable falling off in mass murders, closing of churches, and persecution of priests.

But within a month of the meeting at Lewes things began to liven up. Mr. Lloyd George was one of the people who had been studying events in Russia. He gave an interview to John Bull in December 1929 in the course of which he said:

The Bolshevik dictator is making an heroic effort to reorganize the agriculture and industries of Russia... If he succeeds, then Russia will become a most important factor in the trade, commerce, and finance of the world.

Others were also interested. On Dec. 19 1929 a meeting was held in the Albert Hall presided over by Lord Brentford, who as Sir William Joynson Hicks was Home Secretary when Arcos was expelled from the land.

Letters to the Editor

Pacifists In Parliament

I CANNOT help deploring the criticism of Reginald Sorensen, MP, by Reginald Reynolds, even for the excellent and exhaustive reasons which Mr. Reynolds puts forward. By defending his fellow Labour MPs Mr. Sorensen has drawn on himself strictures which, if made at all, should justly be divided between several other honourable names in political pacifism.

The reconciliation of conflicting loyalties is not so easy for everybody as it appears to Mr. Reynolds. Without detracting one whit from our admiration for Mr. Maxton, or our profound disappointment with the part played in this war by the Labour Party as a whole, it is surely obvious that it was easier for the ILP leader to vote against the Government, than for official Labour Members still endeavouring to act as a pacifist leaven within the war-supporting lump.

The suggestion in Mr. Reynolds's letter is that Reginald Sorensen, by withholding his vote, demonstrated a lack of courage and integrity. Such an allegation seems plainly fantastic to anyone who can imagine what it must have meant, month in, month out, for two and a half years of war, to go on asking unpopular questions certain of contemptuous answers by impatient Ministers, in a House of Commons atmosphere which never seems to a fairly frequent spectator to be exactly conducive to moral courage. I, for one, believe that the position of the pacifist movement both in and outside Parliament owes a great deal to Mr. Sorensen's persistent, undaunted questioning, and I hope he will not even consider resignation.

The Peace Pledge asks of its signatories only that they shall refuse to support or sanction a war. It does not even commit them to opposing one except by implication; much less does it define the terms of that opposition. Surely even an MP is entitled to interpret the Pledge in accordance with his own conscience, without having the operations of that conscience dictated to him by others? We are all of us, I think, much too liable to fall upon each other for isolated examples of apparent failure, while forgetting that pacifism in wartime demands and receives from those who subscribe to it—and not least in Parliament—an exceptional measure of determination and endurance in all circumstances all the time.

VERA BRITAIN

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What the War Is About

I THANK you for the copy of Peace News which you have now sent me fairly often, so perhaps you will allow me to take up a short space in answering its arguments.

This war is not a struggle between the Haves and the Have-nots, as Mr. Williamson says. It is a war between the builders and destroyers. I agree that Danzig was not a cast-iron cause upon which to come into the war. We should have come in earlier on the side of Czechoslovakia. The fact remains that the destroyers had gone too far and that by the time the Danzig question was being pressed, they had to be stopped. It does not seem to occur to Mr. Williamson that our chief crime is that we allowed Germany to go on torturing her own nationals while we kept up economic and diplomatic contact with her. We are our brother's keeper—or should be.

If, Sir, both you and Mr. Williamson want to know what this war is about, the answer is simple: in Germany even in peace time you would both have been beheaded. Therefore, in a sense, this war is being waged to keep your heads upon your shoulders. This may seem to you (and I have every sympathy with you if it does) an inadequate motive for war. Nevertheless, even the publication of Peace News stands for a principle, and it is this principle that is at stake.

May I say in answer to Dr. Salter, MP, whose leaflet you sent me, that I think it is, to put it mildly, somewhat narrow-minded to write of this war as though it were a question of Christianity. If Jews are picked, do they not bleed? as one of the greatest of the sons of man once wrote. Do not Mahomedans, Hindus, Buddhists, Confucians, and the rest love their homes and their lives as much as other folk? Are they to be allowed to be butchered without being given our gratitude? Dr. Salter says that he does not believe it is really impossible for the statesmen of Europe to arrange an armistice and make peace. I agree with him that it is not impossible. It is only too horribly and easily possible. It is what we did last time.

F. TENNYSON JESSE

Parteen, Prestbury.

Lord Chatfield's letter to The Times on March 6 reveals unexpectedly something of great importance in determining the causes of this war. He says:

The main cause of our weakness was the rule laid down in the early twenties that we were not to be ready for war for 10 years. Thus, in 1932, when the rule was abolished under pressure from the chiefs of staff, we could not be ready until 1942 (even had there been political unity on defence) because of the atrophy that had struck out armament production as well as because of the London Naval Treaty.

This seems to establish that the British Government started definitely preparing for war before Hitler came to power and may explain in part why Hitler's continual efforts for peace and disarmament between 1933 and 1935 were rejected.

Hitler, of course, became a most useful bogey-man, from the point of view of the war-preparers, in getting the country into a state which might be called "political unity on defence"—a process which culminated in the lie, officially endorsed, that Hitler broke his word by marching into Prague on March 15, 1939—but Lord Chatfield's statement disposes once and for all of the myth that we were reluctantly driven to rearm because of Hitler.

HUGH ROSS WILLIAMSON

London S.W.1.

This meeting passed a resolution protesting "against the persistent and cruel persecution of our fellow-worshippers in Russia and especially against the suppression of religious instruction of the young." It will be noticed there was no mention of trade, Lena Goldfields shares, or Czarist debts.

ARCHBISHOP'S INFORMATION

On Feb. 12, 1930 in addressing the Upper House of Convocation, the Archbishop of Canterbury took a hand in the business. Speaking there he said: "It is not easy to get accurate information about anything which happens in Russia."

But the Archbishop was not prepared to let the difficulty of getting facts stand in his way of giving them. He went on:

But no-one can question the truth of the long and shocking tale of the imprisonment, the exile, the deliberate doing to death of prelates and parish priests, of monks and nuns, and of the humblest folk.

The Archbishop then informed the House that he was having "a careful inquiry made into the present facts."

If one could have presumed to give advice, the Archbishop would have done well to consult his colleague of York. He seemed to have the facts—otherwise how could he say on Feb. 12: "No words can be too strong to express the indignation and abhorrence with which we hear day by day news of a revival of persecution."

Canterbury, however, proceeded with his inquiry. On Feb. 12, 1930, he was about to launch it. By April 2 he presented the results.

Only 43 days, it appeared, were necessary to collect all the relevant facts of what was happening in one sixth of the world. Naturally, things were as bad after he got all his evidence as they were when he was going by hearsay. And such evidence! Here is a sample.

A poor hungry child was asked: "Are you hungry?" There could only be one answer, "Yes." The child was told: "Then ask your God for bread." The child was made to pray. No bread came. Then a picture of Lenin was produced, the child was told: "Now ask Lenin for bread," and immediately a portion of bread was put into the child's hands.

Now that may be a true story, but the Archbishop could not have proved it was true. Nothing could have proved it was true except the confession of the foolish teacher who did all these foolish things whilst school visitors were in the classroom.

SIGNAL FOR PROTESTS

And as the tale proceeds we find this persecution had taken place as far back as 1928 and there had been no protests from the Convocation of Canterbury until Mr. Henderson opened diplomatic relations and restored the trade treaty. Nor, be it noted, had the Archbishop soiled his tongue with the word "trade." Nor did he threaten war.

But neither of these necessary adjuncts to the higher life was overlooked. On Feb. 5, 1930 Mr. Baldwin came near to a threat of war when, in attacking the Labour Government for opening up relations with Russia, he said: "It was not always thus that this country dealt with foreign nations who persecuted Christians."

It is gratifying to reflect that the last country we punished for this offence has greatly improved. I refer to China, even with the knowledge that there was some opium and bonds involved in that holy crusade.

Turkey, too, persecuted Christians in Mr. Gladstone's day. Disraeli refused to punish her and, up to the time of writing at least, she is so Christian that she is entitled to Lease and Lend, although of course doing more leasing than lending.

"FRAUDULENT PHRASES"

Now this tirade may seem to be merely an attack on Archbishops. That is not its purpose. Its original intention (as I indicated in my article in Peace News for March 6) was so to write that Sir Stafford Cripps would accept Lenin's advice to guard himself against accepting and using "fraudulent phrases."

And if readers will take the trouble to read up the literature against Russia, they will find precisely the same type of fraudulent phrases used against Russia as are now used against Germany. Let me quote the Archbishop once again. In a warning note he said:

The Soviet Government has a representative in this country. Let him take note that a strong public opinion is rising, shared by persons of every class, party, and creed, which will insist that satisfactory diplomatic relations must depend, not on material advantages only, but also and even more

(Continued on page 4)

Mistakes That Brought The War

(Continued from page 1)

catastrophes as the present war—without bearing constantly in mind the factors which sent it astray. It is only the perpetual consciousness of yesterday's mistakes that will prevent exactly the same errors being committed today and tomorrow.

Dr. Benes is a case in point; his utterances make it clear that, given the opportunity, he will again become the spokesman of a policy which will plunge the world inherited by our children into yet another major conflict.

Those who today can learn nothing and forget nothing are far more dangerous than the reactionary Bourbons of whom the epigram was first made. If they and their supporters refuse to apply the lessons of history, others must take on the job instead.

The Way Things Change

(Continued from page 3)

on the common acceptance of those principles of justice, liberty, and humanity which are the basis of all international intercourse. Has not that become, if not a fraudulent phrase, at least a familiar one? With the difference that Hitler's Germany is substituted for atheist Russia.

But although the Archbishop was only concerned with the religious aspects, there were others. At a meeting of the International Chamber of Commerce in Paris, Dec. 5, according to The Times of Dec. 6:

Sir Arthur Balfour said that it was a mistake to imagine that the Five Years' Plan would not be a menace if it did succeed. It would be big enough to be dangerous whatever degree of success it achieved.

Sir Felix Schuster said Russia was attacking the economic and political welfare of the rest of the world. Against this grave menace to the very structure of civilization, certain remedies should be applied at once without further discussion.

That, he it noted, was said against Russia, not Germany.

A MAD WORLD

Now it may be perfectly true that any country which menaces our trade also menaces world civilization, but why should it be left to business men to tell the truth and why must prelates and politicians and puff writers alone be the purveyors of fraudulent phrases?

This is a mad world, my masters. It only needs to be added that German Archbishops joined hands with their English brethren in denouncing Godless Russia. Today we join with holy Russia in denouncing Godless Germany.

It is no excuse to say that Archbishops are servants of the State first and of God second. In 1930 the Archbishops were all for God. Moreover, they were carrying their campaign of special prayer into all the armed forces of the Crown against the declared policy of the State. As it happened to be at the time.

Anyway, Russia's wheat, timber, butter, and sweets came to Britain. And literature appeared with the sworn testimonies of men who had escaped from the slave camps. The literature seems to have been preserved and the word Germany substituted for Russia.

Yet we did not go to war with Russia. As Mr. Wendell Willkie said recently, Russia never was a trade enemy. But by 1932 we did scrap all Mr. Henderson's work and by 1934 we were inviting Russia to the League of Nations. All religious persecution seemed to have stopped automatically in Russia and begun automatically in Germany. A quite new menace to civilization had arisen.

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Six Months for Woman C.O. who Refused Work-Order

A WOMAN conscientious objector has been sentenced to 6 months imprisonment for failing to comply with a Ministry of Labour direction for employment. No woman CO had previously been sentenced to more than a month.

It is announced that women in all age-groups from 20 to 30 can register as COs, but women COs should obtain information from their nearest advisory bureau on the subject.

Louisa Hercok, 22 years old and unmarried, of Southgate, a full-time worker for Jehovah's Witnesses, was summoned at Tottenham on March 6 on a charge of failing to comply with a direction to go to Crouch End Hospital as a ward maid. She pleaded that she had a conscientious objection to that work as she felt a clear vocation to the religious work she was doing.

When the Bench announced that Louisa Hercok would be fined £25 and imprisoned for 3 months, she said she did not feel able to pay the fine, which was then commuted to 3 months imprisonment making a total of 6 months.

The magistrate suggested that the Public Prosecutor's attention should be drawn to the International Bible Students' Association (Jehovah's Witnesses) as "people are virtually using this organization as a cloak for fifth column work."

On Feb. 22, Esther Turrie, 23 years old and unmarried, was sentenced at Colchester to one month in similar circumstances.

WOMEN AND C.O. REGISTER

The Central Board for COs has been informed by the Ministry of Labour that instructions have now been given to all Labour

Exchanges that all women of proclaimed ages—i.e., generally speaking, unmarried women of the 20-30 age-groups inclusive—may apply for provisional registration as COs. The previous practice has been to register women COs only in the 20 and 21 age-groups now being dealt with under the National Service Acts.

It is not thought advisable for women to apply immediately for registration as COs, except where directions under the Defence Regulations are expected forthwith, as the CBCO is taking up with the Ministry of Labour the exact effect of applying to register.

In the meantime, petitions for the release of Louisa Hercok and Esther Turrie have been lodged through the CBCO in order that they may be given an opportunity to register as COs.

There is no legal reason why they should not be directed, but Mr. Bevin gave an assurance in the House of Commons that "Absolutists" would not be directed. The exact meaning of this is not clear, but the rights of women are being vigorously pressed.

INCITEMENT CHARGE

At Norwich on Feb. 23, Jack R. Ebbage, of South Walsham, a member of the Peace Pledge Union, was charged under the Defence Regulations with inciting a man to evade national service, the first charge of its kind to be brought. Ebbage was

alleged to have written to William Whitmore:

"Please do not think I am being personal or entering into your private affairs, but it might perhaps interest you to know the following. Should you fail in exemption from the Services, after trying again, one course remains, if you will not be offended by it. It is quite legal for anybody who has not been medically examined to turn to be a CO. Should you care to do this, I will help and also put you in touch with folk in Norwich who could advise and help. Trusting I have not offended you, and remaining in secrecy throughout, J.R.E."

Giving evidence, Whitmore said that he had volunteered for the RAF and had never discussed the question of conscientious objection with Ebbage who was an employee of his father's firm. Mr. Harry Bailey (for Ebbage) denied any attempt to incite. Ebbage had been registered conditionally as a CO.

The Chairman of the Bench said the magistrates considered the case very serious and fined him £3 and costs. The case had been instituted by the Director of Public Prosecutions.

THE NEW APPEALS

Appeals under the National Service (No. 2) Acts have been heard in the London area and will continue until later in the month. A number of COs imprisoned for refusing medical examination have been registered conditionally on taking up civil work, such as work on the land, or work in social relief.

One of the applications dismissed was that of Gordon Muirhead, of Ealing, who challenged and won a case against the Brentford magistrates for attempting to impose unlawful punishment upon COs, and who was later sentenced to 12 months imprisonment.

Summoned at Richmond, Surrey, on Feb. 16 for failing to fulfil the condition of his registration as a CO, Alfred Anderson was sentenced to six months imprisonment with hard labour. The conditions were the usual ones—ARP, land work, etc.—but he informed the Ministry of Labour that he felt he would be serving the country better by remaining in his occupation as postman driver.

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LITERATURE &c. (Contd.)

HOW TO GET rent, mortgage interest debts reduced or payment postponed. Those in financial difficulties caused in any way by the war should read R. S. W. Pollard's "The War Relief Charter," (post free 1s. 2d.), Blandford Press, 16 West Central St., W.C.1.

QUAKERISM. Information and literature respecting the Faith and Practice of the Religious Society of Friends, free on application to the Friends' Home Service Committee, Friends' House, Euston Road, London, N.W.1.

READ The Graal League: a Foundation by Alfred Hy. Haffenden. A program of individual life and group action. The C. W. Daniel Co., Ltd., Ashington, Rochford, Essex. 1s. 2d. post paid.

MEETINGS, &c.

A CONFERENCE of under 35s is to be held under the auspices of the Council of Christian Pacifist Groups at Friends House on Sat. Mar. 28, 11 a.m.-7.30. John Raven and Michael Barratt Brown will be the principal speakers and Doris Steynor will preside. A syllabus of the proposed discussion can be obtained from the Secretary, C.P.G. Drayton House, Gordon St., W.C.1.

CENTRAL LONDON Group of FoR. New members welcome. Meetings held at 17 Red Lion Square fortnightly commencing Tues. Mar. 24, 5.15 to 7 p.m. Study of pamphlet "Social Justice and Economic Reconstruction" is proposed; copies 4d. each from 17 Red Lion Square. Preliminary reading is recommended. THE CASE for Food-Relief. Public Meeting, Mar. 17 at 7.30 p.m., The Tudor Room, Zeeta's, Putney High St. Speakers: Rhys Davies, M.P. Sybil Morrison, Roy Walker; Chairman: Stuart Morris.

WHALLEY ABBEY. Retreat for pacifist teachers and others interested, Tues. April 7 to Fri., April 10; subject: "Christian Education in a changing world." Will those interested please write to Dorothy Green, 1 Redcliffe Rd., Nottingham.

MISCELLANEOUS

GROUP MEDITATION (London), Yoga, and Heard-Huxley theories. Active proponents, write Bragg, "Merville," 105 Tulse Hill, S.W.2.

PERSONAL

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ANGLO-CATHOLIC C.O. (28) in West London (Ealing-Southall) anxious to meet or correspond with pacifist priest or sympathetic religions (Pax, A.P.F.). Please write Box 159 PN, 3 Blackstock Rd., N.4.

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